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Agriculture

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**TO:** Agency Heads

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**SUBJECT:** Establishing a Center of Excellence for Physical Security  
Countermeasure Management

### **INTRODUCTION:**

As a result of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Strengthening Service Administrative Solutions (SSAS) Project, the following policy has been established to improve and standardize USDA Physical Security Countermeasure Management.

### **BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:**

An objective of the USDA SSAS Project includes ensuring that USDA Agencies increase workforce security through the proper use and management of physical security countermeasures in a standard and efficient manner throughout USDA. In the area of Physical Security, the OHSEC Physical Security Division (PSD) will serve as a Center of Excellence to assist agencies in their efforts to standardize and adhere to federally mandated policies and procedures related to implementation of security countermeasures. This will support USDA Agency activities associated to mitigating identified threats and vulnerabilities throughout USDA facilities.

Physical Security Countermeasure Management is outlined in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Interagency Security Committee (ISC) criteria. This mandates that any facility entering into the Federal inventory on or after April 12, 2010, shall use the physical security criteria (PSC) process in accordance with the ISC Standard, *Physical Security Criteria for Federal Facilities* and the ISC Standard, *Facility Security Level Determinations for Federal Facilities*.

The ISC Standards are issued pursuant to the authority contained in Executive Order 12977, and as amended by Executive Order 13286. These standards are applicable to all buildings and facilities in the United States occupied by Federal/Non-Federal employees for nonmilitary activities. These include existing buildings, new construction, or major modernizations; facilities owned, to be purchased, or leased; stand-alone facilities, Federal campuses, and where appropriate, individual facilities on Federal campuses; and special-use facilities.

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**ACTIONS:**

USDA Agencies: In accordance with this policy, when constructing new facilities, signing new lease agreements, or mitigating threats and vulnerabilities at existing facilities, USDA Agencies should:

- Utilize the OHSEC Security Countermeasure Center of Excellence for assistance with the implementation of security countermeasures;
- Determine the ISC security level and conduct physical security assessments for all applicable USDA facilities to identify threats, risks, and vulnerabilities;
- Draft Risk Mitigation Plans to address identified vulnerabilities (may require development of Performance Work Statements (PWS's) and Independent Government Cost Estimates for security countermeasure implementation);
- Technically support, as required, the negotiation of contracts and lease agreements to ensure facility risk mitigation through proper installation of compliant physical security countermeasures;
- Perform the technical requirements of government acceptance and periodic testing of security countermeasures in accordance with the PWS's and manufacturer's specifications and warranties;
- Provide operational management and control for physical security of their facilities and assets; and
- Comply with all physical security directives, regulations and manuals.

USDA OHSEC: Effective immediately, OHSEC should:

- Staff a Center of Excellence to provide guidance and advisory services to the USDA Agencies in the review of Security Countermeasure PWS's, Security Design Packages, Blueprint Reviews, and Contract Proposals to ensure effective design of security countermeasures for USDA facilities; and
- Coordinate government acceptance testing/security commissioning with agencies on a case by case basis.

As staffing levels allow, OHSEC will look to include lease reviews into this service. Future initiatives may include a mandatory review by OHSEC of these items, as the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) paragraph 2.95 (b) (7) (vii) Part 2 states that OHSEC will conduct reviews Department-wide to ensure compliance.

If you have any questions please contact the OHSEC Physical Security Division at [physicalsecurity@dm.usda.gov](mailto:physicalsecurity@dm.usda.gov) or call at 202-720-5225 for additional information or to submit documentation for review.